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UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

3 October 1966

ASALI REVEALS PLOT OF JORDAN, CIA, SYRIANS

Interview With AL-AHRAM

Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 0500 GMT 1 October 1966--M

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(Summary) Col. Talal Abu Asali, former commander of the Syrian front who took part in the attempted coup of 8 September, has arrived in Cairo from Amman, where he had taken refuge after the abortive coup and where he spent over three weeks. After dangerous and exciting circumstances Abu Asali succeeded in leaving Amman with a Jordanian passport given him by King Husayn, who thought he had won him to his side. The secrets and details of the plot against Syria induced Abu Asali to leave Jordan and expose the objective of the plot. He succeeded in convincing the Jordanian authorities that he would go to Beirut to win the support of the National Command of the Socialist Arab Bath Party against the present regime in Syria. However, when Abu Asali arrived in Beirut he decided to get in touch with Cairo.

In an interview with Muhammad Hasanayn Haykal on Friday, Abu Asali said: Regardless of my party affiliation with the National Command of the Bath Party, the UAR is the only power capable of foiling and exposing the plot. Therefore, I decided to come here at any cost to acquaint the UAR authorities with the details and facts about the plot.

The aim of the plot as witnessed by Abu Asali from the minutes and evidence and the experience he lived through is to "bring about the downfall of Syria and its inclusion in the Arab reactionary orbit which collaborates with imperialism; to set up in Damascus a government that would take orders from Amman and Riyadh, inspired by Britain and the United States; and to pave the way, if possible, for a Hashimite agent throne in Syria for King Husayn."

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Abu A Ali outlined the participants in the plot as follows:

"1--King Faysal, who lavishly finances the plot, and King Husayn, who supervises the execution of the plot, assisted by his Premier, Wasfi at-Tall, and carried out by the Jordanian intelligence machinery which has been set up and is directed by the CIA in coordination with the British intelligence, of which Wasfi at-Tall was at one time an official";

2--Some Syrian capitalists and former statesmen;

3--A number of tribal chieftains, including some members of the Al-Atrash clan of Jabal al-Arab led by Amir Hasan al-Atrash;

4--A large group of former Syrian military men, including those who recently took refuge in Jordan after the abortive 8 September attempt and who were deceived by the leader of the coup, Salim Hatum, who kept secret his suspect contacts with Jordanian Premier at-Tall and chief of the Jordanian intelligence Al-Kilani;

"5--The American CIA, which has placed the entire operation within its direct concern and which has sent a 'special operation' group to Amman to issue daily directives through Col. Muhammad Rasul al-Kilani, chief of the Jordanian intelligence, who is regarded as the CIA man in Amman and its liaison officer."

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The plan of the plot included: The formation of a "Syrian National Front" (Jabhat wataniyah suriyah) which would consist of reactionary leaders in Syria and others and which would set up a Syrian government in exile in Amman; the formation of a Syrian military division of former officers and bedouins, to be enlisted in return for cash, which would be supported by Jordanian desert guards disguised in Syrian military uniform and if necessary by the Jordanian Army, planes, and tanks, for the purpose of carrying out military operations against Syria; the payment of funds to anyone extending a hand toward Amman; and preparation for a general strike in Damascus. "In belief, the plan calls for strikes, then disturbances, then armed interference, then the fall of the regime in Damascus into the hands of the Syrian National Front."

Abu Asali said: I personally met with Hasan al-Atrash, who was entering the office of Col. Ibrahim Ayyub, chief of the Jordanian military intelligence. I witnessed tribal chieftains living lavishly in the Philadelphia Hotel and saw the training camp in Mafraq, where training continues and where arms are available in unlimited quantities. Abu Asali added: "I witnessed all that and spent sleepless nights pledging that I would do anything not to expose Syria to an invasion operation like that of Cuba by the CIA. This similarity is not my term, for the plotters themselves in their planning followed the events that occurred in Cuba, benefiting from the lessons derived from their development. I heard some who told me frankly that they (the Americans--ed.) are determined, since they had failed in Cuba, that they shall succeed here in Syria."

Explaining the circumstances that forced him to enter Jordan after the recent abortive attempt, Abu Asali said: I believe that the leader of the attempt, Salim Hatum, deceived us. We had agreed on the restoration to power of the National Command on the Socialist Arab Bath Party, but Hatum had other contacts which we learned of too late. Our plans were to detain Chief of State al-Atasi and Salah Jadid in As-Suwayda as hostages should our operation fail. Our companions in Homs were to occupy the Aleppo radio if I failed to occupy Damascus and its radio.

However, Salah Jadid's driver succeeded in alerting the authorities, who massed a larger number of forces. When the failure of our attempt was apparent, we decided to avoid an armed clash. I fled and hid in a village and later sought refuge in Jordan, where my companions and I were accorded an unexpected welcome and were politely interrogated by the chief of the Jordanian military intelligence. We were then moved to a special hotel reserved for Syrian officers.

The following day we met Jordanian Premier Wasfi at-Tall in the Az-Zarqa officers club at his request. About 30 of us officers were present. At-Tall told us that King Husayn considers Damascus and Amman as one and that "we desire a situation that would bring about stability in Damascus and want you to give us the necessary solutions." From that moment I began to realize the whole picture and decided to act by myself. I asked Premier at-Tall his opinion. He replied that this was premature, as the situation was serious in Syria and he wished to cooperate with us. I then asked for time to consult with my colleagues.

Abu Asali said that he met with his fellow officers, who agreed to his proposal that the National Command of the Socialist Arab Bath Party should be consulted.

Subsequently an interview took place between seven of us and King Husayn in the presence of Premier at-Tall, chief of intelligence Al-Kilani, chief of public security Col. Rida Basha, and chief of military intelligence Col. Ibrahim Ayyub.

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Premier at-Tall had a private 10-minute talk with Salim Hatum. The King told us that he wanted to deliver Syria. I then explained my views regarding the proposal for contracting the National Command of the party in Lebanon with a view to preparing an organized action. We were told that Dr. Munif ar-Razzaz, secretary general of the Regional Command of the Bath Party, would arrive in Jordan shortly.

When Ar-Razzaz failed to arrive, one of my colleagues and I were given Jordanian passports to fly to Beirut airport, where a Jordanian diplomatic car would be waiting for us. I managed to escape amid the congestion of traffic in Beirut and went to a friend's house. I told my colleague that I would pursue another course and gave him half of the 2,000 liras given to us. I felt that the situation was serious and that I should offer all that I have to the national quarter capable of confronting the coming battle. I have come to Cairo with all that I hold and possess.

(Editor's note: Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic at 1830 GMT on 2 October carries a 10-minute recorded interview with Col. Talal Abu Asali following his arrival in Cairo from Amman. Asali gives details of his defection to Jordan, his interrogation by Jordanian intelligence, his meeting with Premier at-Tall and King Husayn, and his departure for Lebanon and Cairo. In this interview Asali does not implicate the CIA in the alleged plot and does not refer to the United States by name, confining himself to references to "imperialism." He does specifically name the other alleged plotters he had implicated in the above interview with Haykal.)

Press Comment

Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 0600 GMT 2 October 1966--M

(Summary) The Cairo press today comments on the new plot unmasked by the confessions of Syrian officer Col. Talal Abu Asali. In this connection AL-AKHEBAR says: "Reaction cannot possibly surrender easily. It is in its nature to struggle and fight to its last breath. Whenever it is encircled tightly, its struggle becomes more intense. It uses all kinds of weapons, legal or illegal, honest or dishonest." Only events will reveal the movements of reaction. Only events can unmask it, for one can play with words and falsify intentions.

King Husayn, King Faysal, and Mr. Bourguiba have spoken much about Arab nationalism and the Palestine cause in a manner that made certain people think they were honest protectors of nationalism and the Palestine cause. However, events have unmasked them, one after the other. Bourguiba's statements in Beirut have unmasked him. His attitude toward severing relations with West Germany, his visit to it, his statements there, and his agreeing to permit part of his country to become a military base for a foreign force have also unmasked him. King Faysal was unmasked by his desperate attempts to establish an Islamic alliance in response to foreign desire, as well as by a war against his own people and the entire Arab nation, including the Palestine cause.

"The arms deals with Britain and the United States, the British pilots who stay in Saudi Arabia to pilot its planes and train its army, King Faysal's violation of the Jidda agreement, his inciting the Yemeni tribes, his supplying arms to them, his smuggling of gold to these tribes to buy their consciences and corrupt them, his participating in a plot to topple the Syrian regime, his financing of the Syrian deviationists and those who escaped, and his encouragement of methods of work based on bribery and falsehood have unmasked him."

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King Husayn, who has constantly shown his anti-Zionist inclinations in support of the Palestine cause, has also been unmasked by events as a first-class reactionary who takes part, together with his supporters, in a dishonorable plot to topple the system of rule in Syria so that if the plot succeeded he would sit on the throne of Jordan and Syria.

If we were to discuss reaction, we would find that reaction, which pretends progressiveness and which alleges it marches in the vanguard of the peoples, will seize the first opportunity that presents itself to plot and fight the peoples, Arab nationalism, and all Arab issues. Half-truths, bribery, and lies have never succeeded in keeping any people from realizing their will. This is an old lesson.

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Down the headline "On the New Plot," AL-AHRAM says that hardly a day passes without the imperialist intelligence and its hirelings introducing a new plot against the Arab homeland. "Syria is the direct target nowadays, although the UAR is the permanent and real target. The imperialists do not spare our country the latest inventions in the field of crimes and plots. The confessions of the Syrian officer, Col. Talal Abu Asali, and the exciting information he made known to the public in the pages of AL-AHRAM and which he placed at the disposal of the UAR are the best witness to all this."

These confessions reveal the treason of Saudi Arabia and Jordan against the question of Arab liberation and their full connection with British and American intelligence and the close coordination of their plans with those of Israel and its hostile actions. Reactionary plotters inside the liberated Arab countries cooperate with the rulers of Saudi Arabia and Jordan in the service of imperialist designs and its plots.

"The reactionaries and plotters desperately carried out their feverish activities against Syria before the present revolutionary system in Damascus had a chance to bolster its pillars and restore the close relations between the revolutionary forces in the Arab homeland, particularly in Cairo and Damascus. In their actions the plotters depend on the remnants of reaction left behind by the reactionary secession, elements which lost part of their social and economic concessions. The danger alarms sound around us daily, calling on all the national revolutionary forces in the Arab world, particularly in the UAR, to double their vigilance, to arm their masses with clearer ideology, and to increase their effort to bolster unity in their ranks.

"We have confidence in the ability of Damascus to resist the plots of the adventurers and reactionaries, the pressure of the Hashimites and Saudis, and the threats of the Zionists. Damascus is not alone in this battle--the battle of life and death for all the Arab liberation forces. As the national and progressive platforms continue unmasking plots, the UAR and Iraqi armed forces are fully ready to help the sisterly region should Israel choose to begin its aggression against Syria. The fate of the plotters on the Syrian border is no different from that of their ilk in the Bay of Pigs on Cuba's shores. The similarity in this instance does not originate with us. It is recorded in the documents on the plots by the Jordanian intelligence officials and their masters in the West."

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AL-AKHBAR 3 October Editorial

Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 0600 GMT 3 October 1966--M

(From the press review)

(Excerpts) In an editorial entitled "The First and Last Aim," AL-AKHBAR says: The UAR has adopted a stand dictated by its historic responsibilities. It cannot possibly adopt a different stand. It has therefore declared that it will intervene militarily should there be any attack on Syria whether from Jordan at the hands of Arab reaction colluding with imperialism, or from Israel, which is an agent for imperialism. It is painful for every Arab to see that Jordan's stand is similar to Israel's stand both with regard to method and purpose.

It is also painful for every Arab to see that the plot links Jordan to Israel and the CIA. Therefore, when the UAR declares that it is prepared to intervene military should Syria face an attack from either Jordan or Israel, it is merely taking the natural stand expected from it in view of its responsibilities toward Arab nationalism, the Arab liberation movement, and its own security, system, and future. The plan as revealed is aimed ultimately at striking at the UAR--the heart of the Arab struggle and pioneer of revolution in the area. All plots which have occurred in the Arab region, whether east or west, close to or far from the UAR, have been primarily and ultimately aimed at striking at the UAR to silence it and to steer it toward a course compatible with the interest of reaction and imperialism.

Saudi Arabia has been a party to every plot and has played a role which has never changed despite any change in the faces of the plotters. It has been the role of the financier who willingly contributes millions or the role of a shelter which receives those who flee from their respective countries when they fail in their attempts. It is painful for every Arab to see that while on the one hand King Faysal calls for an Islamic pact, on the other hand he pays out millions in order to kill and spread anarchy in an Islamic country over whose debris he wants to set up a throne either for himself or his friend.

AL-AHRAM 2 October Comment

Cairo MENA in Arabic 0615 GMT 2 October 1966--M (FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

(Text) Cairo--AL-AHRAM says today: "In the light of the facts, details, and proofs conveyed to Cairo by Col. Talal Abu Asali on the plot being concocted in Jordan at present against Syria--the plot which King Faysal finances, King Husayn executes, and for which the American Central Intelligence Agency, (CIA) plans and directs--the UAR finds itself forced not to stand idly by in the face of this attempt to invade Syria and to force it to submit to reaction, which collaborates with imperialism."

The paper pointed out that an official source at the highest level in the UAR has stated: "The UAR can only link the Israeli provocations against Syria to this plot in which King Faysal and King Husayn collaborate with the U.S. CIA to strike Syria. The UAR regards the two operations as originating from the very same source. Accordingly, the UAR will interfere militarily if need be against any attempt made to invade Syria, whether this attempt is made by the rulers of Jordan, who rove in an imperialist orbit, or by Israel, which roves in the same orbit."

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The paper says that the official source added: "It is regretful that because of the hatred it harbors toward the freedom and progress of the Arab people, Arab reaction has not hesitated to debase itself to accept coordination with Israel through the American CIA--a matter which is even worse than the debasement of Arab reaction led by Nuri as-Said, when in 1957 the invasion of Syria was planned because of its rejection of the Eisenhower plan. The former American President has recorded this plan in his diary. At the time Turkey was the state which exerted military pressure on Syria and paved the way for the reactionary operation which was ready to impose a civil war in Syria to satisfy its greed. To accept coordination with Turkey is, however, less harmful than accepting coordination with Israel, for Israel now exerts military pressure on the Syrian front while Arab reaction prepares for the invasion operation."

The paper goes on to say: "The information, details, and proofs carried to Cairo by Col. Talal Abu Asali have been carefully studied and analyzed during the past 48 hours." Col. Talal Abu Asali arrived in Cairo the day before yesterday after spending three weeks in Jordan, where he took refuge against his own will and in extremely difficult circumstances following the failure of the 8 September attempt in Syria and in Jordan. When the elements concocting and executing the plot were trying to make him join them, he had the opportunity to learn of serious information. He decided to leave Jordan at any cost and go to Cairo to transmit the true picture. This is because he regards Cairo as the only Arab national front capable of striking and foiling the plot.

FAYSAL-U.K. PLOT IN SOUTH ARABIA ALLEGED

Cairo MENA in Arabic 0640 GMT 1 October 1966--M (FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

(Text) Cairo--AKHBAR AL-YAWM has uncovered the details of a plot which is being engineered between King Faysal and Britain and by which King Faysal has pledged to resist the revolution in the occupied South and to work to preserve British interests in the area in return for a promise by Britain to the King to extend his influence over the entire area.

The paper said that Britain has proposed that King Faysal contact the tribal chieftains in the Hadramawt region, which has an area of 80,000 square miles and which is one of the occupied south areas east of Aden, and asked him to come to an understanding with the chieftains on stemming the tide of the revolution and on preventing it from extending to the eastern region, where the oil-rich British protectorates are situated, by working to transform the Hadramawt area into an isolated region between Aden and the other protectorates.

The paper added that the tribal chieftains at first rejected King Faysal's invitation to meet in Jidda to discuss the conditions of the area but, due to pressure by the oil companies to stop the oil extraction operations in the area, they were forced to attend the meeting, which ended with the signing of a document. One of the document's articles provides that the tribal chieftains cooperate with Britain by handing over to it the rebels who demand its departure from the area.